



# Annual Report



Mission in Health Care and  
Development (MHCD)

2023





# Clean Birth Kits for Safer Childbirth—South Kivu, DR Congo

BKFA is committed to supporting the Clean Birth Kits for Safer Childbirth, the funding from Neilson Foundation was used towards:

- The procurement and production of 10,000 Clean Birth Kits, aligning with the BKFA Clean Birth Kit with one additional pair of gloves per kit
- Employment and four day training of 50 Community Health Worker (CHWs), and employment of 2 administrators to supervise the assembly of the Clean Birth Kits
- Other administrative cost

The project's main objective is to implement a holistic approach to improve health and socio-economic wellbeing in a community of South Kivu, DRC by reducing infant mortality and maternal morbidity, improving socio-economic wellbeing through financing of micro-projects and increasing global awareness on health within the community.

- to reduce infant mortality and maternal morbidity rates, by providing 10,000 kits to health care centres and traditional health workers.
- to improve socio-economic wellbeing, by financing micro-projects that will benefit 50 households. This will be implemented by providing a stipend of 30 cents / kit assembled (in exchange of the production of 200 birthing kits totalling US\$60 each) to each of 50 vulnerable women to help them to start a revenue-generating activity.
- The employment of 50 CHWs and 4 Midwives/ Midwifery Seminar Trainers to assemble the Clean Birth Kits. The Midwifery Seminar Trainers have been trained on how to engage with CHWs. Each CHWs and trainer will receive one full box of 100 gloves

# 20,000+

## *INDIVIDUALS HAVE BEEN DIRECTLY IMPACTED*

- A total of 50 traditional midwives from diverse villages and territories within South Kivu Province (including Uvira, Fizi, and Walungu Territory) actively participated in this project. To reach the MHCD headquarters in Luvungi, they employed various modes of transportation, including taxi motorbikes, cars, and some even journeyed on foot. During their four-day stay at the MHCD Mission in Luvungi, MHCD generously offered both food and accommodation to ensure their comfort and well-being.



- Each traditional midwife received an allocation of 200 kits, which they further distributed among their fellow traditional midwives within their respective villages. In addition to the kits, we provided them with extra boxes of medical gloves to take home.
- The birthing kits directly benefited 10,000 expectant women and 10,000 newborns. Furthermore, 50 Community Health Workers, who are also traditional midwives participating in the Midwifery Seminar, distributed medical gloves to approximately 2,700 birthing women who lacked birthing kits. They also imparted knowledge on achieving clean births in the absence of proper kits.
- The project's impact extended to an estimated 30,000 individuals indirectly. This includes the relatives of 50 vulnerable women who benefited from microfinance activities, enabling them to educate 200 children.
- Within the community, individuals living with disabilities experienced tangible benefits, whether through safe birthing facilitated by the kits, meals provided by midwives, or participation in microcredit initiatives. Roughly 30 individuals with disabilities, including epileptics, derived substantial advantages.
- Among the traditional midwives, there were also survivors of sexual assault and other vulnerable individuals who were integrated into the project. These marginalized participants, including eight midwives who were rape survivors enduring challenging circumstances, experienced substantial moral, physical, intellectual, and mental growth through their involvement in the training sessions and the use of locally crafted birthing kits.
- This initiative focused on ensuring safe childbirth but also on key elements such as education for children, food security, income generation for sustainability, empowerment of women, and fostering the overall thriving of the community.



## *CHALLENGES*

1. The transportation of participants posed significant challenges due to the poor road conditions in South Kivu province. Most traditional midwives reside in villages without proper roads, necessitating long journeys on foot for several kilometers before finding suitable transportation.
2. Funding constraints prevented the project from covering the expenses related to invitations and midwife selection, which incurred costs for MHCD. MHCD staff had to visit various villages and territories beforehand, a process that involved distributing invitations and reaching out to traditional midwives for selection, a task that proved to be quite arduous.
3. Communication hurdles arose as many traditional midwives lacked access to phones. This situation consumed considerable time and resources, particularly for those residing in the highlands of Uvira and Fizi Territories, where insecurity prevailed. To facilitate their safe participation in the midwifery seminar, we collaborated with the Congolese armed forces. They escorted the midwives to a secure location, from where they traveled by motorbike to Uvira and then took a car to Luvungi. This effort was essential because their remote villages lacked clinics, trained birth attendants, or nurses. Traditional midwives performed crucial roles in these areas, handling all aspects of childbirth without access to birthing kits, making their participation in the seminar in Luvungi incredibly valuable.



## *GRATITUDE*

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to BKFA and Neilson Foundation for their invaluable support of the locally crafted birthing kits and midwifery seminar project. As outlined in our report, this initiative has made substantial strides in reducing infant mortality and maternal morbidity, while also contributing significantly to the socio-economic progress of South Kivu Province's inhabitants, particularly traditional midwives, expectant mothers, and infants.